

A
LETTER

TO

M^R. H--GG---NS,

FROM A

Student in the University,

On Occasion of His

SERMON

Preach'd at *Christ-Church*, in
the Afternoon, *Sunday*
November 16th, 1718.

Ornari Res Comica non vult.

Dublin: Printed in the Year 1718.

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TRINITY-COLLEGE,

Dublin, Monday November the 17th, 1718.

SIR,

THE Occasion of this Trouble is owing to my having heard you Preach Yesterday in the Afternoon, at *Christ-Church*, I am become a *Senior-Bachelor of Arts*, and am forming my Mind and directing my Studies towards initiating myself into Holy Orders designing to appropriate my whole Life to the Affairs of the Ministry of the Gospel of *Christ*. My grand Observation on this Subject has been, that *Clegrymen* should lay themselves out with extraordinary Diligence and Application upon the *Art of Preaching* : The Priviledge of Dictating from the Pulpit, without Interruption or Controul, and the prejudice that Mens Ears and Hearts are under, to receive for the *last Truth*, what is deliver'd from thence, being the highest Incentives

to them, to become Masters this Way, for, the
 from the two Reasons now mentioned, each tor
 Parish-Curate is in a fair way of being se-
 cure of all the *Passions* of his Congregation; ap
 and if a number of them shou'd agree on fill
 any *Topicks* to be Universally impress'd fro
 throughout the Kingdom, they are likely am
 in a little time, to establish what Set of to
 Principles they please, whether in Politics vie
 or Divinity. For which reason, I have sol
 constantly, of late, frequented *Christ-Church*, yo
 in hopes to become a speedy and successful m
 Proficient in Pulpit-Oratory; justly, I hope
 conceiving, that, where there is a Constan- at
 cy of the best and politeſt Audience, there di
 one might expect the best Performances; w
 that Reasoning, that Diction, that Elocution, co
 that Action, which my *Tutor*, from many ca
 Authors, has shewn me, must all conspire, an
 to make me an exact Preacher. re

I own to you I have often retir'd from bo
 that Place, satisfy'd with the Discharge of ha
 the Day, by the Conduct of several Clergy- an
 men, whole Names I'll at this time forbear an
 wishing that all their Brethren, who come ab
 short of them, in this part of their Duty, yo
 wou'd take it into their consideration, and
 wou'd make such Observations on their M
 own way of Preaching, and the Preference 3.
 which is due to the others, as to render m
 them-

or, themselves more acceptable to their Audi-
 tors for the future than usually they are.

I never had the honour to see you, Sir,
 n; appear where you did Yesterday, but I was
 on fill'd with Satisfaction and Joy, expecting
 s'd from the Vogue that you generally bear
 ely amongst our young Students, at length,
 of to find my self Master of what I had in
 ics view, by the nicety wherewith I was re-
 ve solv'd to observe and imitate your *Manner*:
 ch, you! whom all my Cotémporaries and Fa-
 ful miliars pronounce *the Modern Cicero*.

You must give me leave to tell you, that
 at my several retirements, after you had
 dismiss'd the Congregation, and after I had
 es; weigh'd and examin'd your discourses, ac-
 on, cording to my best understanding, with
 ny care and impartiality (for I am of the slow
 ire, and deliberate kind) I have been at diffe-
 rent times, led into different Opinions a-
 bout your Character, as a Preacher, and
 have resolv'd, and unresolv'd to follow
 gy, and quitt you in an Hundred Particulars,
 ar an Hundred Times.

Sometimes I have thought a most aim-
 able Suffusion of *Modesty* has attended
 you, and I have straightway charg'd my
 Memorandum-Book with ——— *Modestie*.

3. Id Ap. when, before I had made
 my Entry, I have found you affirming in
 the

the most positive Terms, in your *own Name*. At others I have admir'd your inimitable *Audacity*, whether as to the Phrase, which I often found perfectly new; or the *Theme*, which you alone had *Sufficiency* to handle; but on a little recollection, have suspected you for carelessness in Grammer, and Rethorick; and now and then have been pull'd by the Sleeve, by my Neighbours, and ask'd on one hand, did he mean King George, on the other don't this hint at the *Pretender*? As to your Knowledge and Skill in what we call *Theology*, and your learning, as exemplified in Quotations from the Fathers, Poets, and other Authors, you know whether you understand them and Preach a-propro, I am Young and incompetent to that Task, but must let you know that with thanks and Gratitude I am resolv'd to make my self Master, with all imaginable care of your graceful Goodly Look; will buy abundance of *Periwigs*; have order'd a dozen of the whitest Hand-kerchiefs, and have practis'd till I am weary, the Toss of that Piece of white Linnen and he peremptory Affirmations, which are signified, by the Depression of your Right-Hand, from the Right-Ear, upon the Cushion;

not

not without remembering well the Sonorous Rotundity of your Voice, whether you are understood or not.

The thing that has puzel'd me most, has been, whether I should follow you in your great Penury at one Time or your plenty of Words at another; for I have thought them both to be Artful, and want to be inform'd, The first has pass'd so good Sense and Conciseness put together, your Enemies being able to say, that you never want Words, but when you want Matter; the other has appear'd a Plenitude of meaning lost in a Redundancy of Expression, which never fail'd of its due Effect: like Onions rop'd upon Onions, extorting Tears from that part of the fair Sex which is most apt to Cry. I have been so ravish'd with your Dexterity at citeing Texts of Scripture, that I am resolv'd to begin at Revelations to get the Bible by Heart, and so on to Genesis, in hopes to arrive by this new invented Method at your happy Facility of claping down the Sacred Text. Good Soul-saving positive Divinity is what I am fix'd upon from your Practical Discourses, tho' I think eight Proofs was too much by seven yesterday, unless the first had been a more legal Evidence than it was; but as to Controversy you have given
me

me an utter Aversion to it, the very *Popa* shall have good Quarters from me, unless I can quite forget your great Example which I have thus Rigidly laid before me.

I can't think, I can utter any thing Uncorrect or Uncharitable, since I have been so long your diligent Hearer; 'tis impossible I should misapply Scripture, or not understand what I apply, and above all I can never think of making a *Prophet* a Partyman, *St. Paul* a Whig, or *Apollos* a Tory: No! I must keep close to the Text; not Preface it into my Purpose, if it won't literally serve it, nor divide it into what it never meant; not prove nothing from every thing, nor draw innumerable useless uses, or Conclude just as I Began, to the infinite Dissatisfaction of most of my Hearers.

And yet after all, these fair Prospects which I propose to my self from your Example. I must confess I was stagger'd in a great measure at your Performance Yesterday:

Don't you think that you discover'd a previous Warmth in your outward Man as you enter'd the Pulpit? You Hearers expected you would blaze out soon into that flaming Discourse they were afterwards entertain'd withal? Pray how did you feel?

feel within yourself, whilst the *Vent* was in Operation? Pardon my freedoms, 'tis for my Instruction I make these Remarks, and hope you'll Rectify whatever I judge amiss. I don't think you studied the Sermon, any more than I do my Observations, but then the *Pomp* of the Delivery made amends for your other Defect!

There was a smart Fellow sat by me, whom I guess'd to be a Transcriber of *Pue's* Occurrences, who said (when you had done) the *Doctor* has given us a Rowling Discourse, and has claw'd the Rogues off, but methinks he has mix'd too many of my *Masters* sayings, with his own Oratory. I don't find you are blamed for want of Method or for not Handling the Subject you propos'd, but 'tis thought your Heart was full of Wrath when you uttered some of your most favourite Sentences.

We allow'd you to confine your self to *future Judgment*, when you propos'd Discourseing on the loss of a Soul, and gaining the World by it, but why wou'd you leave the Scripture Phrase of *Exchanging* one Thing for another, and call it a *Swap*?

Your Friends think you gave up the Cause too much, when you allow'd the Whigs to be *Successful, Pompous, Magnificent, Powerful and Rich*, all which you

Thrice did in a Breath, and in a long Chain of Wrattling Epithets, and wish you had spar'd your Wit when you told them they'd be Damn'd for their *Prosperity* at the Day of Judgment; for, the *weakest* *wou'd go to the Wall*. Is this the Original Hebrew of any of *Solomons* Proverbs? or is it your own sheer Ingenuity?

Pray Sir, how is it, that your Congregation *mauls* you for what you deliver? 'Tis a Term in the Bear-garden, I am told, and 'tis thought you are BULKY enough to defend your self there. I must disagree with you, in your Witticism of saying they *Maul* you as the *Herodians* did our Saviour [are not Comparisons odious? I forbear worse Words;] By *entangling you in your Talk*; for 'tis allow'd, that you have all the Talk to your self in the Pulpit. But I thank you for it, this beginning (tho' a *Figure* call'd, a BLUNDER) put us all into good Humour, and this 1st Laugh kept us awake during this whole Sermon.

Pray Sir, is it artful and of benefit to the Hearers, to abuse them at the entrance of a Sermon? Or is it better at first to use them like Gentlemen, and to bring 'em to a composure of Thought, in order to bespeak their Attention to the very last Period of the Discourse?

Indeed

Indeed Sir I thought till now that in a Christian Country, especially in these Kingdoms, Preachers shou'd suppose their Auditors Christians, and on that Supposition Preach repentance to them for the Sins of their Lives, and assure them on that Repentance and Faith in Christ, of Salvation: But you, instead of this tell them at first setting out that many of them have no Principles, and soon after that many more did not believe Christianity at all: 'twas very candid, and true for ought you knew, but pray since you thought thus of your Audience, why did not you prove Christianity to them, and convince them then of what they did not believe before? I own this is a Learned Task, and Hugo Grotius de Veritate, &c. had done your business, as well as what you were pleas'd to bestow upon us; But instead of making Men Christians who were not so, you very wisely and most contradictorily preach to them as tho' they were Christians, and bid 'em repent or be D--d, or there is a future Judgment to come; which according to your Supposition, they won't believe a word of. And here, I must now think you were once mistaken in your Discourse, you having endeavour'd to build your threats and Terrors of a Day

Day of Judgment, on the writings and Acknowledgment of Heathen Philosophers. For my part I am now engag'd in the midst of these Gentlemen, and find no such thing in all their works. And was in great pain for your Seven succeeding Observations, your *learning* having fail'd you in your First. These Men dream'd indeed of different States for departed Souls; But our appearing at a General Judgment; and with our Bodies, to account to a Saviour, is all *revelation* and for which those very Philosophers call'd a Great-Man a *Babler*; which according to you nei her He, nor They were to and therefore pray Sir take care of yourself.

I am now thinking that you are an *Anti-Herodian*, for you entangle your self and not *others* by your *Talk*.

Having been thus free with you, in my Criticisms, I hope to have your excuse thro' the kindness of what follows, for, of all the Images, Allusions, Allegories, Metaphors similes or that ever I met with, I never was so entertain'd and pleas'd with any of them all, as with your comparing the danger of *Salvation by a Death-bed-re-penance*, to the improbability of the Fall of the Roof of *Christ Church*; its falling at that

very

no very Minute wherein you had this lucky
 Thought produc'd in the Roof of that Car-
 g'd nat Tenement of Yours, your earthly
 and Scull. How cou'd you be so Ingeni-
 ks, ous as to tell the People, that if you fore-
 saw such a thing, you wou'd run out of the
 ing Pulpit, and leave 'em to save their own
 ese Souls? And how Eloquent were you
 for when you repeated it, summ'd it up again,
 t and said, *as improbable, as, should the Roof*
ys, of this Church fall upon my Head and crush
ion me to pieces in this Pulpit. Oh! admiran-
 ers *dum hominis Acumen.* Oh! the persuasion
 ac of your Eyes, when they were roul'd up
 ere to that kind Roof from whence you ex-
 oupected no Harm: And happy were your
 Audience, had you *began* with these inno-
 an cenceys of Wit and Oratory, like your
 self Predecessor Tully, *si quid est in me Ingenii*
judices qui, quam sit exiguum, &c. and in-
 my deed I admir'd the Condescention, of
 use your Humility, amidst so mighty an Ex-
 , oaltation of your Spirits and Fancy: And
 Me truly Humble Art thou O! Higgins,
 h, I who cou'd Apologize for the *Lowness* of
 with *thy Thought*, which consisted, in bringing
 ing to ones Mind, Beams and Rafter and a
 -re Ceiling most high.

ll of I was diverted from these meditations in
 hat Church, occasion'd by your dwelling on
 ery that

that dear *Simile*, and shewing your Learning in distinguishing between *Possible*, and *Probable*, for which Discovery, and the Application of it, no doubt you are thank'd by the Congregation, and will never be forgotten.

* *Whilst Tiles on Houses, Slates on Churches lie.*

I say I was diverted by a Merry-fellow, who said, he was glad that he had it from your own Mouth, that it is not *Probable*, 'tis barely *Possible* that the Church may be in *Danger*; True said another, with great Joy in his Countenance, (I fancy one of your *no Principle, no Christian-men*) and I will affirm it never will be in *Danger*, unless from these Parsons, who raise the Roof and the Steeple, to so unreasonable an altitude, that at last it must fall with it's own Weight.

To Sum up the whole, I must needs tell you that I think *this Discourse*, and your *Manner* on this Occasion are not very fit for my imitation and Standard in Preaching; The Man was warm, his discourse loose, his Language low and reproachful, and I hope to hear you soon agen from the same place delivering a *consistent Discourse, without any Violent Agitation of your Spirits*; Which you will infallibly accomplish by introducing what natural-

* *Trapps Abramule.*

ly

ly arises, from your Subject, and not
 by forcing any thing into it which is
 foreign to the purpose, and may be bet-
 ter omitted; as your saying that the King
 who *now* sits on the Throne shall be
 brought to a General Judgment, as well
 as the meanest Peasant, and I will add so
 will you and all his Seditious, Rebellious,
 Perjur'd Subjects, and that those of them
 will be brought to condign Punishment
 at that Day, who happen not to be *hang'd*
 in this present Life. By the word *now* some
 hinted, your supposing another would sit
 e're long on *the* Throne, but this is per-
 jury in you amidst your Oratory, and I'll
 rather suppose you meant, *you know not*
what, & hope that neither the famous Roof
 of Christ-Church, nor any other Judgment,
 will ever fall on you till that Day comes,
 and then I'll secure you for a Tith-Pig.
 So Dear pattern of Preaching adieu, and
 believe me your real *Admirer* and most
 humble Servant.

Anthony Truebottom.

Errata.

P. 6. l. 10, read the Sleeve. P. 8. l. 27. read
 as you enter'd. Last word of the same p. read
 you, instead of that.

POSTSCRIPT.

Ray do you not think, that, at such a Critical Time, as you Preach'd, we should [in Prudence] wait for the Arrival of English Pacquets? and might not you [on the Addresses from Lords and Commons by our last Letters] have chosen, [may be] to Preach on some other Subject and to omit the famous Word *Now* after the Repentance which you enjoyn'd to Men who wrong'd others of their Inheritance, depriv'd them of their Fortunes, plunder'd them of their Goods, robb'd them of their Property, injur'd them in their Estates, with a String of Sayings tending this way? And don't you think (to your own Knowledge) there were many other Sins, which you might as readily have named for Men to Repent of? especially to those poor Souls whom you hinted to be under Persecution; to be wrong'd, abus'd and injur'd. *i. e.* in the Language of the Whiggs to be **DISABLED** from bringing in Popery and the Pretender.

Now may you and yours, and every other Person be ever thus Persecuted, &c. for the Good and Safety of Our KING, our CHURCH and STATE. And may all my Fellow Collegians say, Amen.